

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 45 without my signature.

I support returning local governance to the Oakland Unified School District when it is appropriate to do so. To date, the emergency loan to Oakland Unified has been the largest to a school district in the state and has been under the control of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). While the reports produced by the Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team are valuable tools, they provide only a snapshot of the district at a particular point in time. Furthermore, I am concerned that the Office of Administrative Hearings will not be in a position to make decisions related to the day to day management of the school district, as these matters are generally not a matter of law, but a matter of overall educational benefit.

As such, I am concerned with the process for determining return of local control, as proposed in this bill. The pace at which it seeks to restore the authority of the school board may surpass the pace at which the state administrator can imbed sustainable reforms. Current law contemplates the return of the district to local control once the SPI has a level of confidence that the improvements in the district are sustainable. In the interest of the educational well being of the students, it is well worth investing the time to allow the SPI to finish the work that has already begun.

Therefore, I am unable to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger